



S. 1760 – Healthy Start Reauthorization Act of 2007

FLOOR SITUATION

S. 1760 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) on July 10, 2007. The Committee on Energy and Commerce ordered the bill to be reported by voice vote on September 17, 2008. S. 1760 passed the Senate by unanimous consent on April 30, 2008.

S. 1760 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 23, 2008.

SUMMARY

S. 1760 requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to consider certain criteria in making grants under the Healthy Start Initiative, including those that contribute to infant mortality, and the extent to which applicants for grants facilitate a community-based approach to the delivery of services and a comprehensive approach to women's health care to improve prenatal outcomes.

The bill repeals the Secretary's authority to make certain additional grants, such as assisting communities with technical assistance and the replication of successful projects.

S. 1760 reauthorizes the Healthy Start program at \$120 million for fiscal year 2008, and for the years 2009-2013, the amount authorized for the preceding fiscal year is increased by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers for that year.

BACKGROUND

Beginning in 1991, the Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) launched the Healthy Start Initiative. The program initially funded 15 urban and rural sites where infant mortality rates were 1.5 – 2.5 times the national average. Healthy Start provides prenatal care, public education services, and promotes healthy prenatal behavior. The Healthy Start Initiative has been subsequently reauthorized by Congress, as it was in 2000 under the Children's Health Act of 2000.

Infant mortality and low birth weight are major public health issues in the United States. Although infant mortality rates have dropped in the past decade, it remains a significant issue, especially in African-American, Hispanic, and Native American communities. The infant mortality rate in the United States is about 6.4 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that implementing S. 1760 "would cost \$2 million in 2008, when compared to current law, and \$453 million over the 2008-2013 period, assuming the appropriation of the authorized amounts." [Full CBO Cost Estimate](#)

STAFF CONTACT

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